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NSC BRIEFING

6 October 1955

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### POSITION OF FAURE GOVERNMENT

1. The defection of the Gaullists in the French cabinet makes premier Faure's early downfall ~~almost certain~~ *probable*.
2. Only the imminence of the Geneva talks may delay his immediate overthrow.
3. Four of the five Gaullist Social Republicans in the cabinet resigned on Faure's request. *(a new Defense Minister, Billotte has reportedly been named.)*
4. The ~~parliamentary~~ *Gaullist* group has appealed to president Coty to form a new government.
5. Coty cannot act until Faure resigns or is overthrown.

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NO CHANGE IN CLASS. ☐  
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DATE 12 Jan 86 REVIEWER: 006514

*offering to Cortis*  
3. The Gaul... move was an attempt to... Faure on  
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North African policy.

- 2. Other rightistsopponents of Faure's Moroccan program may now be encouraged to desert the government.
- 3. Faure's downfall will be precipitated, but he may succeed in getting assembly approval on his Moroccan program for which he can count on the support of the Socialists, who are in the coalition.
- 4. It is also possible that the Socialists may support him without participating in the government, to avoid a prolonged political crisis during the Geneva conference.
- 11. Faure's chances had already been weakened before the Assembly reconvened the worst of these is the tangled North African situation:

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X. Thirty interpellations have already been deposited with both right and left attacking his Morocco policy.

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- X. The Right is angered by the ousting of puppet sultan ben Arafa of Morocco, and even more by Faure's insistence on going ahead with 3-man "Council of the Throne"
  - X. The Left is angered by government delays in implementation Faure's Aix-les-Bains plan for Moroccan settlement.
  - X. Deputies are also fearful of Algerian unrest, where postponement of a special Algerian Assembly session has disrupted Faure's plan to step up "integration" of Algeria's Moslems.
  - X. On French domestic scene, increasing labor trouble is another factor of weakness.
  - X. There is possibility of Communist-sponsored call for general strikes.

D. A third weakness is Faure's need to ask Assembly for additional funds (to cover wage increases and new military expenditures).

E. Finally, he faces the threat of rejection by voters in the Saar of "European status" in a 23 October referendum there.

IV. Factors in his favor include:

A. The French walkout on the issue of Algerian debate in the UN--this action tends to counterbalance Faure's loss of prestige over vacillation on Morocco and most non-Communists are supporting Faure on the walkout.

B. The French National Assembly's reluctance to precipitate a political crisis at present.

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IV. Approved For Release 2000/08/29 : CIA-RDP79R00890A000600050015-0 among them:

- A. The imminence of the foreign ministers' meeting at Geneva (27 October).
- B. The difficulties of forming a new French government, which include
  - 1. Technical hurdles in Assembly voting;
  - 2. Preoccupation of all-French political parties with next spring national elections.

*Their reluctance is also based on*  
e. The fear on the part of most French political leaders that Faure's overthrow would increase the chances of ex-premier Mendes-France:

- 1. ~~Either~~ to succeed Faure before next elections,
- 2. Or to campaign in next year's national elections against a new premier of a more conservative stripe than Faure

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While, in North Africa itself, most Arab leaders--except  
for ben Arafat's departure--have been unfavorable to Faure's policy;

*continued on next card*

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- ~~2.~~ The most serious development in the 1 October attacks has been the possible capture by the guerrillas of French arms depots at 2 of the 6 outposts assaulted.
- ~~3.~~ Possession of modern arms <sup>would</sup> ~~will~~ greatly enhance Berber capabilities.
- ~~4.~~ Terrorism has also been stepped up in North African coastal cities on Morocco's Atlantic coast, as well as across the Algerian border (near the small port of Nemours).
- ~~5.~~ To the East, in Algeria, we expect that the Algerian rebels will increase their activities during the period when the Algerian issue is before the UN.
- ~~6.~~ On 3 October, the press reported a new series of coordinated Algerian attacks.

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8. UN airing of the Algerian problem is also likely to enhance the prestige of extremist Algerian nationalists, thus making Algerian Moslem acceptance of France's moderate reform program (authored by Governor General Soustelle) more difficult.
9. Conversely, Algeria's French settlers will oppose the French program more strongly than before.
10. Meanwhile, withdrawal of troops from western Algeria, to reinforce Morocco, faces the French with the imminent danger of an outbreak of guerrilla operations in that Algerian trouble-zone.